

Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed April 8, 2004. The fee for addition of new claims (or conversion of claims from dependent form to independent form) is included herewith. An appropriate Petition for Extension of Time to Respond is submitted herewith, together with the appropriate fee.

Claims 1, 3-4 and 6-16 were pending in the Application prior to the outstanding Office Action. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-4 and 6-16. The present Response amends claims 3, 6, 12 and 15, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration claims 1, 3-4 and 6-16. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested.

Interview on June 21, 2004

On June 21, 2004, Examiner Colbert and the undersigned agent for the Applicant engaged in a telephone interview. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesy and opportunity to discuss the present application. During the interview, the prosecution of the present invention was discussed. In particular, Applicant proposed amendments to claims 3, 6, 12 and 15, and, for reasons stated below, respectfully submits that these claims and the claims that depend on them are in condition for allowance.

RESPONSE TO REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC §103

The Examiner rejected claims 3-4 and 6-16 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent Application No. 5,904,727 (Prabhakaran) in view of United States Patent Application No. 6,366,851 (Chojnacki) and further in view of United States Patent No. 6,101,496 (Esposito). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections based on Prabhakaran in view of Chojnacki and Esposito.

Prabhakaran

Prabhakaran discloses a method for graphically tracking the location and status of mobile transmitter units (col. 2, lines 5-54). Numerous marks are superimposed on a screen and may include icons representing vehicle locations, landmarks, jobs, and operations (col. 9, lines 12-15). The icons representing vehicles can be different shapes and sizes (col. 9, lines 25-28). In Prabhakaran, mobile transmitters on delivery trucks are detected, and the location of the truck is displayed on a rasterized representation of a geographical area. Unlike the present invention, Prabhakaran does not disclose radials extending from an anchor point, or markers located on an interpolated position of a radial that extends from an anchor point.

Chojnacki

Chojnacki discloses a system for collecting data about the position of roads in a geographical area. A primary copy of a geographical database includes data that represents geographical features of roads. The data may include attributes of roads including geographical coordinates along the roads, curvature points along the roads, street names of roads, address ranges along the roads, and points of interest in the covered area (col. 4, lines 17-20 and lines 35-48). Shape point data are used to represent points along a curved road. Shape point data may include data indicating geographic coordinates (such as latitude and longitude), altitude, curvature and road grade. (col. 7, lines 25-45). Proto-shape points are determined and re-positioned to represent a road. In order to ensure that the points accurately depict the road, the points may be shifted. The shift is determined by generating a line tangent to the curvature of the road at the particular proto-shape point. The tangent may be determined by drawing a straight line between the proto-shape point and the proto-shape point located immediately before the proto-shape point. Once the tangent line is generated, a second line or normal line is generated that is normal to the tangent line. The shifted new point is located along the normal line at the centerline shift distance from the proto-shape point along the normal line (col. 23, lines 23-50). Chojnacki does not disclose one or more radials extending from an anchor point. Unlike the present invention, Chojnacki discloses computing a shift distance and location of a proto-shape point.

Esposito

Esposito discloses a method of adding ordered information (OI) data to enhance the precision of a georeferenced database. A database of addresses is compared to other address databases, such as OI records, to geocode to the center for the highest precision small area geography (col.5, lines 42-44, col. 5, lines 63-67). Esposito discloses placing an address to the smallest possible geographical area, whether by city, zip code, or address. The area is formed for a group of nearby low-precision addresses so that other nearby low-precision addresses can be placed into the same group (col. 8, lines 12-24). Esposito discloses processing, comparing and adding coordinates to a database. Esposito does not teach radials, storing information regarding a radial, or placing markers along radials.

The Claimed Invention Distinguished

Claim 1 recites a computer implemented method for identifying an anchor point, defining radials extending from the anchor point, and associating at least one item relating to the anchor point with each radial. None of Prabhakaran, Chojnacki or Esposito disclose or suggest radials extending from an anchor point and associating at least one item relating to the anchor point with each radial. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 1 is allowable.

The invention as claimed in claim 3 recites a computer implemented method for identifying an anchor point, defining radials extending from the anchor point, and placing markers at interpolated positions on respective radials. None of Prabhakaran, Chojnacki or Esposito disclose or suggest radials extending from an anchor point or markers placed at interpolated positions on the radials. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 3 is allowable.

Claim 6 recites a computer implemented method for identifying an anchor point, defining radials extending from the anchor point, associating at least one item relating to the anchor point with each radial, and storing the radials and information regarding the anchor point in a database. Though Esposito discloses a database, none of Prabhakaran, Chojnacki or Esposito disclose or suggest radials or radials extending from an anchor point, and further don't disclose storing radials and information regarding the anchor point in a database. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 6 is allowable.

Claim 12 recites a computer implemented method for identifying an anchor point, defining radials extending from the anchor point, associating at least one item relating to the anchor point with each radial, assigning a direction to each radial and calculating an endpoint to each radial. None of Prabhakaran, Chojnacki or Esposito disclose or suggest radials or radials extending from an anchor point, and therefore don't disclose assigning a direction to a radial nor calculating an endpoint to each radial. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 12 is allowable.

Claim 15 recites a computer implemented method for identifying an anchor point, defining radials extending from the anchor point, and associating at least one item relating to the anchor point with each radial, wherein said anchor point is a centroid and each item is a location within an area associated with said centroid. None of Prabhakaran, Chojnacki or Esposito disclose or suggest radials or radials extending from an anchor point, and therefore don't disclose wherein said anchor point is a centroid and each item is a location within an area associated with said centroid. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 15 is allowable.

As discussed above, independent claims 1, 3 6, 12 and 15 recite the elements discussed above that distinguish the claimed invention from Prabhakaran in view of Chojnacki and further in view of

Esposito. Claims 4-5, 7-14 and 16 all directly or indirectly depend from these allowable independent claims in addition to containing additional distinguishing elements. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are now in position to overcome this rejection and requests the rejection be withdrawn.

The references cited by the Examiner but not relied upon have been reviewed, but are not believed to render the claims unpatentable, either singly or in combination.

Conclusion


The references cited by the Examiner but not relied upon have been reviewed, but are not believed to render the claims unpatentable, either singly or in combination.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned before an advisory action is issued in order to avoid any unnecessary filing of an appeal.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 28, 2004

By: 
Stephen R. Bachmann
Reg. No. 50,806

FLIESLER MEYER LLP
Four Embarcadero Center, Fourth Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-4156
Telephone: (415) 362-3800